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Politics

Obama's GITMO Propsoal Draws Fire From GOP Candidates Vying to Replace Marco Rubio

By [KEVIN DERBY \(/WEB/20190328005634/HTTP://SUNSHINESTATENEWS.COM/SOURCE/KEVIN-DERBY\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20190328005634/http://sunshinestatene.../source/kevin-derby)

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While currently lost in the shadow of the presidential contest, the four Republican candidates running to replace U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., all came out swinging at President Barack Obama's call on Tuesday morning to shutdown the terrorist holding facility at the Guantanamo



David Jolly, Barack Obama and Ron DeSantis

Bay military base.

Pointing to the expenses of running the facility, Obama plans to go to Congress and get them to approve sending detainees to facilities in the United States including in Colorado, Kansas and South Carolina.

Obama had promised to close the facility when he was elected in 2008 and he continued to push back against the enhanced interrogation methods approved under President George W. Bush's presidency and employed there.

"The plan we're putting forward today isn't just about closing the facility at Guantanamo," Obama said. "It's not just about dealing with the current group of detainees, which is a complex piece of business because of the manner in which they were originally apprehended and what happened. This is about closing a chapter in our history.

"Keeping this facility open is contrary to our values," Obama added. "It undermines our standing in the world. It is viewed as a stain on our broader record of upholding the highest standards of rule of law."

Obama's call drew fire from the GOP majorities in Congress including two congressmen running for the Senate in Florida.

Senate hopeful U.S. Rep. David Jolly, R-Fla., made the case against Obama's call proposal.

"Guantanamo is currently home to 91 terrorist inmates arrested in connection with the U.S. war on terror, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed the mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks," Jolly said. "Bringing enemy combatants into the U.S. is reckless and will only embolden the enemies of freedom who wish to do us harm.

"At a time when terrorism continues to spread throughout the world, we must remain resolved to defeat it," Jolly added. "The president should focus on defeating terrorists, not accommodating them. The stakes are too high to jeopardize Americans' security for the sake of enhancing a personal legacy."

Pointing to his his time in the Navy Reserve and as a military prosecutor who served at the Guantanamo Bay Detention Center, U.S. Rep. Ron DeSantis, R-Fla., also disagreed with Obama.

"Bringing hardened terrorists to the U.S. homeland harms our national security," DeSantis said. "The obsession of President Obama with closing the terror detention facility in Guantanamo Bay is based on his left-wing ideology, not on a clear-eyed assessment of America's national security interests. Congress should remain steadfast in blocking the president from bringing terrorists to our shores."

Lt. Gov. Carlos Lopez-Cantera, who is also running for the Senate, also slammed Obama's proposal.

"Yet again, President Obama is putting his political agenda and legacy over the safety and security of American citizens," Lopez-Cantera said. "The plan he has offered to close Guantanamo is incomplete and unsustainable, doing nothing to assure Americans they are safe. By bringing terrorists to our shores, President Obama opens the potential for liberal groups to stand up claiming these terrorists now are entitled to the same rights as those they seek to kill. Furthermore, what is to stop the Castro regime from making a deal allowing one of our enemies to establish a presence in the very facility that our taxpayer money built. President Obama's entire policy toward Cuba is misguided and simply wrong. It is wrong for our military, it is wrong for our national security and it is wrong for freedom."

Businessman Todd Wilcox, an Army veteran who saw combat in the Middle East, also tore into the decision.

"As President Obama begins packing for his Cuban vacation next month, he's sending a terrible message today to the American people that our safety and security is secondary to dictators he wishes to win over," Wilcox said. "GITMO was established after 9/11 as a detention center for the terrorists who've committed acts of war against the American people. It is unconscionable that this president, even as we face growing threats here at home and around the world, would ask the American people to accept any plan that includes housing these terrorists on our homeland.

"With the clock running out on his presidency, President Obama has once again failed to demonstrate any leadership," Wilcox added. "The president's plan does not outline how and where he will house current and future detainees. Let's be clear – this includes those who President Obama and his administration have declared too dangerous to release."

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